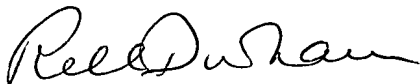


CERTIFICATION OF TRANSLATION

PLASTIC CONTAINER FOR DOMESTIC
WASHING MACHINES

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am the translator of the documents attached and certify that
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Signature of translator dated this 15th day of February 2005

4/11/15

10/534094
JCC6 Rec'd PCT/PTO 06 MAY 2005

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PLASTIC CONTAINER FOR DOMESTIC WASHING MACHINES

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to a plastic container
for domestic washing machines, as described in the
description, which has improved the same in certain
aspects of design and technology to achieve new
performances and solve certain problems exhibited by
10 the present containers.

The subject matter of the invention is to improve the
join between the steel bearing shell and the plastic
part of the container, i.e. to improve the physical
15 features of the washing machine container and the
injection-moulding method for the same to prevent the
formation of cracks, especially in the region in the
vicinity of the corresponding bearing housing or the
bearing shell provided to mount the axis of the rotary
20 drum of the washing machine.

· GENERAL PRIOR ART

It is known that, in addition to other components,
25 washing machines comprise a container in whose interior
the rotary drum to receive the load is attached in such
a way that the axis of the same is mounted on metal
bearings arranged on a bearing shell which is arranged
for this purpose in a cavity of the container.

30 In addition, it is known that the plastic containers
are obtained by injection moulding such that first the
bearing housing or the bearing shell is arranged in the
mould of the injection moulding machine and the
35 injection moulding itself takes place thereafter.

This injection moulding method has a number of problems and disadvantages which are derived from the following:

- 5 - Differences in the shrinkage coefficients of the materials since a metal bearing shell is involved on the one hand and a plastic container on the other hand.
- 10 - Different cooling curves which are also caused by the different nature of the materials.
- Different mass ratio likewise caused by the different nature of the materials.
- 15 As a result of these differences which appear during the injection moulding process, micro-gaps are formed between the plastic and steel material and consequently a poor join between the materials, which gives rise to a weakening of the container and consequently to the
20 possible formation of cracks at those points where the micro-gaps or points of weakening develop.

The problems described hereinbefore yield a further problem whereby an intermediate space is formed at the
25 housing of the sleeve seal, resulting in movement of the same and causing filtration of water via the bearing housing or the bearing shell.

An attempt is now made to solve these problems by means
30 of direct injection moulding of the washing machine container onto the bearing shell although the injection moulding method is not optimal, regardless of the fact that since the container is still made of generally poor-quality plastic, damage occurs at high motor
35 speed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The container forming the subject matter of the invention was invented to solve the problems and disadvantages described previously using an inexpensive solution which prevents the formation of cracks in the container and imparts better physical properties to said container since a better join is achieved between the bearing shell and the plastic part of the container.

Specifically, the novelty of the invention comprises a plastic container for domestic washing machines which internally receives a rotary drum whose axes are mounted on bearings provided in a bearing shell made of metallic material, characterised in that at least one plastic member is received around the structural unit formed by the bearing shell and the plastic member before the remainder of the plastic container is injection-moulded.

In a preferred embodiment at least one plastic member is used around the bearing shell in an injection-moulding method which differs from the injection-moulding method of the remainder of the plastic container and allows the structural unit comprising the shell and plastic part to cool down in order to carry out a second injection moulding without heating the bearing shell since, in the presence of different shrinkage coefficients and temperature gradients, the join is stronger with a first independent plastic injection moulding.

In another advantageous embodiment, the material of at least one of the plastic members differs from the material of the remainder of the plastic container, and also the material of at least one of the plastic

members is of a higher strength and quality than that of the remainder of the container since a better-quality plastic is required at this critical joining point to the bearing shell. However, the remainder of
5 the container can consist of a cheaper material since it need not withstand such stresses.

In another embodiment of the invention, the plastic member that is injection-moulded onto the bearing shell
10 forms an envelope or insert which is provided with external reinforcing ribs or webs which impart a greater strength to the joining regions to the container since this is obtained by injection moulding around the structural unit formed by the bearing shell
15 with its envelope or insert.

The plastic member in the form of an envelope or insert can cover the entire side surface of the bearing shell and the attachment area of the sleeve seal of the same
20 to obtain a complete join to the shell.

In another embodiment, the plastic member that is injection-moulded onto the bearing shell, forms a ring which surrounds the attachment of the bearing shell and
25 the attachment area and a section of the side surface of the bearing shell.

The ring can have any variable configuration which makes it possible to achieve different forms of
30 connection to the structural unit comprising the bearing shell and the plastic container.

With the aid of the features which have been specified, the physical features of the container and the
35 injection moulding method itself are improved, whereby the micro-gaps between the plastic material of the container and the steel material of the bearing shell

are reduced whilst at the same time, the adhesion or cohesion between the materials is improved and correct thermal insulation of the bearing shell during the final injection moulding of the container is naturally
5 achieved.

A dimensional improvement and smaller deviation in the area of the sleeve seal of the bearing shell is also achieved by using better-quality materials.

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Finally, it remains to be said that among the features that have been cited, an increase in the reinforcement of the container sections which withstands the most loading and a dimensional improvement in the web
15 thicknesses is achieved.

To sum up, the advantages derived from the plastic container for domestic washing machines according to the subject matter of the invention, can be summarised
20 as follows:

- Better injection moulding method,
- Cracks are prevented in the area of the container
25 in the vicinity of the bearing container on which the axis of the rotary drum of the washing machine is mounted.
- Better mounting of the sleeve seal.

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The container can be made of a low-quality plastic such as polypropylene with talc and can withstand a high speed during rotation of the drum and this is because the plastic member which is injection-moulded onto the
35 bearing shell is made of a harder, better-quality material than the plastic material forming the container.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

To complement the following description and help
5 provide a better understanding of the features of the
invention, a set of drawings is enclosed with the
present specification on which basis the novelties and
advantages of the plastic container for domestic
washing machines according to the subject matter of the
10 invention are easier to understand. In the drawings,

Fig. 1 is a sectional view of a bearing shell
suitable for a plastic container of a washing
machine, wherein the bearing shell receives
15 the plastic member and in this case forms an
envelope having high strength and good
quality,

Fig. 2 is a sectional view of the practical
20 application of the subject matter of the
invention wherein the structural unit
according to Fig. 1 can be seen with the webs
of the plastic member which facilitate better
cohesion between the materials forming the
25 container when this is injection-moulded
around the plastic member which is formed in
this case by an envelope with the webs,

Fig. 3 is a detail of an embodiment in which the
30 plastic member injection-moulded onto the
bearing shell is a ring, both members forming
a structural unit onto which the plastic
container is injection moulded,

35 Fig. 4 is a longitudinal sectional view of an
exemplary embodiment in which the plastic
member, constructed as a ring, is attached on

the attachment specified by the bearing shell and the plastic container, said plastic container being injection moulded around the structural unit formed by the ring and the bearing shell,

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Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the ring forming the plastic member which is injection moulded onto the bearing shell and of the same arranged on the corresponding plastic container, and

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Figs. 6 and 7 each show details in sectional view of two variants for attachment of the ring forming the plastic member which is injection moulded onto the bearing shell.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

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Figures 1 and 2 show a bearing shell 1 which consists of steel as usual and is provided with a sleeve seal area 2, wherein a plastic member 3 is injection-moulded onto the bearing shell 1, said plastic member forming an insert or an envelope in the embodiment according to Fig. 1 and 2, which covers the entire side surface of the bearing shell 1, including the attachment of the same and an inner section of the area of the attachment 2.

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The plastic member 3 is provided with reinforcing ribs 4 or webs which form a component of the outer surface of the envelope forming the plastic member 3, as shown in Fig. 2. so that the plastic material forming the corresponding container 5 acquires a greater cohesion or adhesion with the member 3 during its injection moulding, whereby a greater reinforcement is provided

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in this area of the container 5 which is logically situated near the bearing shell 1 where the container has to withstand the greatest loading.

- 5 In one embodiment, the plastic member 3 can be formed by a simple ring 3' having different forms and shapes, as shown in Figs. 3 to 7 since the plastic member, whether this now forms an envelope 3 according to Figs. 1 and 2 or a ring 3', can have any form or shape since
10 what is important is that the plastic member 3 or 3' together with the bearing shell 1 and the plastic container 5 is injection moulded onto the structural unit formed by both members.
- 15 Finally, it remains to be said that the plastic member 3 or 3' which is injection-moulded onto the bearing shell 1 is of greater strength and better quality than the plastic forming the container 5 so that the member 3 or 3' which is injection moulded in association with
20 the critical area of the container 5 thereby provides a greater strength in this area and thus prevents cracks which occur very frequently in conventional plastic containers since the material of the same is of lower quality.